

Male and Female Teachers' Nonverbal Communication in EFL Classroom

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to examine the kinds of teachers' nonverbal communication mostly used in EFL classroom and the students' perceptions towards the male and female teacher's nonverbal communication in EFL classroom. The research was conducted through descriptive qualitative method involving classroom observation and interview. The respondents comprised of two teachers, a male and a female English teacher and 18 students from three different classes. The result of data analysis showed that there were seven kinds of nonverbal communication used by the teachers in teaching English namely gesture, posture, eye contact, facial expression, touch, voice, and distance. Findings also show that the teachers' nonverbal communication gave impact on the students' learning process, such as teacher's gesture can help the students have better understanding, eye contact with the student means that teacher is paying attention to the students, teacher showed smiling expression while teaching will make students feel happy. While the teacher with an angry expression will make the students feel depressed and uncomfortable, the students feel appreciated if they have touched by the teacher. , some students agree that teachers can help students catch the message better if the teacher has a loud voice. Although teacher raised her/his voice to admonish the students may make them irked and do not attend the class. In implementing touch and distance in teaching EFL, both teachers have restriction because the female students felt bit uncomfortable with male teachers while the male students felt bit uncomfortable with female teachers. Besides, male and female teachers have different ways of using nonverbal communication. Male teacher more actively appreciate the students by giving his thumbs up. Sitting when explaining the lesson was rarely doing by male teacher, whereas female teacher always doing it. On the other hand, female teacher showed her attention when the students were talking by tilting her head.

Keywords: Nonverbal communication, male and female teachers, EFL classroom

1. INTRODUCTION

Generally learning identified by the educational process in schools, involving the interaction of teachers and students in the classroom setting. Everyone would agree that successful learning in school is influenced by the quality of teachers, students and learning support facilities.

Students in the class have different styles in communication. They produce various expressions in communicating and it can become effective strategies to communicate in the class. Teachers who are teaching in the class should be conscious of the different communicative styles to aid students in using the appropriate and effective communication strategies in the process of learning English (Mahmud, 2017). As so, teachers are responsible for communicating as clearly and effectively as possible to their students. Nonverbal communication by the teacher can help provide clarity and help students interpret the teachers' verbal. Effective verbal communication is supported by nonverbal communication. The nonverbal is the factors that determine meaning of a verbal message and the feeling and emotion more carefully conveyed through nonverbal message rather than the verbal message. This is consistent with the statement Mehrabian (1972) found that only 7% feeling of affection can be communicated in words. The rest, 38% is communicated through sound, and 55% is communicated through facial expressions (smile, eye contact, and so on).

Nonverbal communication has often been defined a communication without words. Nonverbal is also called silence of communication in which people use body movement, eye contact, facial expression, posture and gesture (Kusanagi, 2004: 383). Nonverbal communication includes facial expressions, eye contact, or lack of eye contact, proximity and closeness, hand gestures, and body language. Despite the implications of the information about nonverbal communication, the teacher should be aware that many nonverbal messages are ambiguous. For example, a smile usually indicates agreement and warmth, but it can also indicate contempt, fear, compliance, deceit, nervousness, resignation even, compliance, on occasion, anger. Nevertheless, nonverbal messages are a rich source of information. Teacher owns nonverbal behavior can be useful in making stronger connections with students, responding to students, and conveying certain impressions about themselves.

Houser & Frymier (2009) cited by Dobrescu and Lupu (2015) state that relationship between the teachers' effective nonverbal communication and students' support the confidence in the subject area, contrast, teachers' poor nonverbal communication make the students' hesitancy about the subject area. Dobrescu and Lupu (2015) "The studies show that promptness is specific to nonverbal communication, highlighting the fact that this way the information are decoded 4.5 times faster than in the case of verbal communication".

Teachers are generally aware of the words they use when teaching, but are often unaware of the extent to which their nonverbal behaviors influence the learning process. Teacher who use consistent verbal and nonverbal behaviors send messages that are more likely to be understood by their students, and in turn, create a more effective learning environment (Richmond et al., 1987). Effective teachers understand how to effectively encode and decode nonverbal behaviors in the

classroom. The learning process in all classrooms is influenced by teachers' nonverbal messages (Heath and Reynolds: 2014)

Besides, Perception is also becoming factor to consider in the quality of teaching and learning process. Many scholars have proven that students' perception toward their teachers is able to influence the quality of learning in classroom. Perception is the impression gained by an individual through the senses then will be analyzed, interpreted and then evaluated, so that individuals acquire meaning. Since, nonverbal communication takes central core in EFL classroom teaching, the students' perception cannot be discarded from discussion. It is to evaluate the effectiveness of nonverbal communication perform.

In education, research about gender usually takes teacher or student as the subject of study, e.g. Gender related to student's learning style. Male and female are believed to be different, one of them in term of their nonverbal communication. Some scholars found that men and women at work place are different in their nonverbal communication.

The research questions of this research are firstly, which nonverbal communication that male and female teachers perform in SMA Negeri 1 Bungoro? Secondly, what are the students' perceptions towards the use of nonverbal communication by the male and female teacher in SMA Negeri 1 Bungoro?

2. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

There are some previous findings of some researchers have relation to this researcher. Mahmud (2014) conducted a research on "Nonverbal Communication in The Classroom: Students Perspectives". It is aimed to reveal the types of nonverbal communication used by teachers in the classroom and the effect of teachers' nonverbal communication on the students learning process. The result shows that there were many types of nonverbal communication used by the teachers in teaching English such as smile, eye contact, proximity, appearance, laughter, and voice quality. Findings also show that the teachers' nonverbal communication gave impact on the students' learning process such as the teachers' smile made students enjoyable in learning and the teachers attractive appearance encourage students to learn actively.

Hassan (2007) carried out research on "Non-verbal communication: The language of motivation for Pakistan students". This study showed that the college students are not only aware of their teachers' nonverbal communication but are also biased towards some types of non-verbal cues and behaviors.

Negi (2009) The Role of Teachers' Non-Verbal Communication in ELT Classroom. This research aimed of examining of nonverbal communication and concluded that nonverbal communication is not only important in daily communication but it is also important for class room situations, it certainly helps them to become more capable at receiving students' messages as well as more capable at sending accurate messages.

Hsu (2006) conducted research on “The Impact of Perceived Teachers’ Nonverbal Immediacy on Students’ Motivation for Learning English”. The results of this research indicated that teachers’ non verbal immediacy behaviors correlated positively and significantly with students’ motivation for learning English.

Lewis (2005) conducted a research on “Gender and Non-verbal communication in the foreign language classroom”. The result of this research showed that female students make eye contact more than the male students and smile more often in the classroom.

Kusanagi (2004) carried out a research on analysis of research on Nonverbal Communication in Language Education at Rikkyo University. It focused on lower level students or classes in their discussions. It concerns on teacher’s gestural accommodation. The studies of teacher talk reported that teachers accommodated their speech and gestures more in lower-level classes, especially gestures, play an important role in teaching and learning.

Rosa (2000) executed the research on understanding potential impact and the role of non-verbal communication in the primary inclusion classroom the purpose of which was to compare the non-verbal behaviors of students who are considered average in ability with those who are perceived as cognitively challenged while they are engaged in regular classroom instruction in both large and small groups setting. The finding shows that in most of the cases, the most of nonverbal interaction occurred between students who sat in close proximity without regard to their cognitive ability.

Gregersen (2007) examined teachers’ accuracy in decoding nonverbal behavior investigative of foreign language anxiety. The results proved that, although there was unpredictability in the ability of observers to decode the nonverbal cues evidential of anxiety, the trainees and teacher were more accurate in assessing the nonverbal behavior of learners who were on the high and low ends of the anxiety scale than those whose scores fell in the middle.

3. RESEARCH METHOD AND DAT COLLECTION

This research used a descriptive qualitative research. The writer did not manipulate or provide specific treatments to variable or design something that is expected to occur in the variables, but all the events, circumstances, all aspects, component or variable run as it is. The aims of this research were to find out what kind of nonverbal communication that mostly used by both EFL teachers (male teacher and female teacher), students perception toward their teachers nonverbal communication and find out whether or not the differences exist from both teachers in ways of communicate nonverbally while teaching.

The results of the research performed descriptively. The variables in this study are the nonverbal communication cues of both EFL teachers (male teacher and female teacher) in teaching and students’ perception toward their teachers’ NVC.

In collecting the data, the researcher used classroom observation and interview with two EFL teachers, a male and a female teacher, and 18 students of SMAN I

Bungoro, Pangkep. The observation class was done to get the data about the kinds of teachers' nonverbal communication mostly used in classroom. The data were collected by video and audio recording. After conducting the classroom observation, the researcher interviewed 18 students to know the students' perceptions towards the male and female teacher's nonverbal communication in EFL classroom by taking audio recording.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Nonverbal communication used by male and female teachers

From the observation by recording, the research found that the teachers used many kinds of nonverbal communication. Kinds of nonverbal communication that researcher found they are gesture, posture, eye contact, facial expression, voice and touching. They indicated used by both teachers, male and female teachers.

Table 1. Nonverbal communication used by the teachers

| No. | Teachers' Nonverbal Communication | Female Teacher | | | Male Teacher | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----|--------------|-----|-----|
| | | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
| 1. | Gesture | | | | | | |
| | a. Hand Gesture | | | | | | |
| | 1) Listing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | 2) Pointing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | 3) Thumbs Up | ✓ | x | x | ✓ | x | ✓ |
| | b. Head Gesture | | | | | | |
| | 1) Head Nod | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | ✓ |
| | 2) Hade Shake | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | x |
| | 3) Head Tilt | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | x | x |
| 2. | Posture | | | | | | |
| | a) Stand Up Straightly | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | b) Sit Down | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x |
| | c) Crouching | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3. | Facial Expression | | | | | | |
| | a) Smile | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | b) Frown | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | c) Serious | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 4. | Eye Contact | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 5. | Touch | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 6. | Voice | | | | | | |
| | a) Loud | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | b) Normal | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | c) Soft | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7. | Distance | | | | | | |
| | a) Personal Distance | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | b) Public Distance | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Based on table 1, it shows that both male and female English teachers used nonverbal communication in teaching EFL. The table shows that both male and female teachers were using gesture when teaching in the class especially hand and head gesture, showing various facial expressions like smiling, frowning and serious face, standing straightly in front of middle the class and crouching around the students, having eye contact with the students when talking to the students, using various voice in teaching, and applying public and personal distance (approaching the students).

Furthermore, the table shows that male teacher more actively appreciate the students by giving his thumbs up. Sitting when explaining the lesson was rarely done by male teacher, whereas female teacher always did it. On the other hand, female teacher showed her attention when the students were talking by tilting her head.

Students' perception towards the use of nonverbal communication by the male and female teachers

The researcher has presented the data related to the students' perception of the teachers' nonverbal communication in findings. The finding showed that the nonverbal communication used by the teacher in the class has affected students' learning process.

One of the examples is the use of gesture by teachers. From the interview, the researcher concluded that most of the students liked if teacher use gesture in teaching process. Teacher's gesture can help the students have better understanding. White (2000) also stated that gesture can reinforce teaching. However, it may also make the students unfocused if it used excessively.

Some students said that teacher make eye contact with the student means that teacher is paying attention to the students. Eye contact is commonly expected between participants in conversation in order to show concern of the speaker for the addressee and vice versa (Mahmud, 2014). On the contrary, some of them feel shy and embarrassed if teacher look at them while speaking. Roviello (2004) cited that it is important in any life situation to maintain the right amount of eye contact. Too much eye contact can make individuals uncomfortable, whereas too little eye contact can make individuals feel ignored.

Smiling, frowning and serious facial expressions had strong effects on student's reactions. Teacher showed smiling expression while teaching will make students feel happy. This student's excitement encourages students to engage in learning activities. It is supported by Mahmud (2014) that students were highly motivated to the teacher who smiled at them, made them laugh in the classroom. While the teacher with an unpleasant expression will cause various negative feelings in students such as fear, feeling depressed or uncomfortable, lazy, angry, or do not care about the lesson.

Another important nonverbal way is teachers' touch. The students feel appreciated if they have touched by the teacher. Sometimes, teacher used touch to warn the students who did not attended the class and give confidence the students. Gladis (1985) stated that effective teacher-student touch can tighten their bond, stimulate further communication and hence facilitate learning. However, not all the students

take positive message from the teacher's touch. Any female students does not like and feel uncomfortable if she was touched by male teacher and vice versa.

Student AA (female student): Ya, di bagian bahu dan tangan. Saya rasa jika perempuan saya merasa biasa saja, tapi kalau gurunya laki-laki saya merasa tidak nyaman. [Yes, I had been touched on my shoulder and hand. I think if it is ok if I am touched by female teacher, but I feel uncomfortable if I am touched by male teacher.]

The teachers also agreed with that student's statement.

The male teacher said "Biasanya dalam aktifitas belajar, saya mendatangi mereka sambil biasanya saya sering menepuk-nepuk punggung mereka bagi yang laki-laki ya kalau mereka bisa melakukan tugasnya dengan benar, saya memberikan mereka motivasi pujian. Kalau laki-laki biasanya saya tepuk punggungnya, kalau perempuan saya cuma mengacungkan jempol, tidak menyentuh. (In teaching learning activities, sometimes I approached to the student and tapped his shoulder if he did his work, I motivated him by tapping his shoulder. It was for male student. For female student I just gave them thumbs up".

Next is about the teacher voice. Some students agree that teachers can help students catch the message better if the teacher have a loud voice. Teacher who used variance in vocal technique when speaking helps the students retain more information. Teacher can emphasize the importance of subject matter by the volume and pronunciation of a word (White, 2000). Although teacher raised her/his voice to admonish the students may make them irked and do not attend the class.

The last is related to the use of distance by the teachers. From the interview, some of the students agreed that they like if teacher walks around the class, approaches and crouches around or behind them. It is very helpful especially for timid student who wants to ask or want more explanation from the teacher. On the other hand, there are some students dislike when teacher approaching them. Sometimes they are startled and be unfocus to do their work. A teacher may vary his or her distance as appropriate to subject matter; however, one should be aware of the message personal space conveys (Roviello, 2004).

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher comes to conclusion. The kinds of nonverbal communication mostly used by male and female teachers in SMA Negeri 1 Bungoro were gesture (hand gesture and head movement), posture (stand up straightly, crouching in, and sit down), eye contact, facial expression (smiling, frowning, and focusing), touch, voice, and distance (personal and public distance).

The use of teachers' nonverbal communication in teaching gave impact on the students' learning process, they were: 1) teacher's gesture can help the students have better understanding. However, it may also make the students unfocused if it used excessively. 2) Eye contact with the student means that teacher is paying attention to the students. On the contrary, some of them feel shy and embarrassed if teacher look at them while speaking. 3) Teacher showed smiling expression while teaching will

make students feel happy. While the teacher with an angry expression will make the students feel depressed and uncomfortable. 4) The students feel appreciated if they have touched by the teacher. Sometimes, teacher used touch to warn the students who did not attend the class and give confidence the students. 5) Some students agree that teachers can help students catch the message better if the teacher have a loud voice. Although teacher raised her/his voice to admonish the students may make them irked and do not attend the class. 6) Walks around the class, approaches and crouches around or behind them is very helpful especially for timid student who wants to ask or want more explanation from the teacher. But, sometimes they are startled and be unfocus to do their work.

Both male and female teachers were implementing nonverbal communication in teaching process, but in implementing touch and distance in teaching EFL, both teachers have restriction because the female students felt bit uncomfortable by male teachers while the male students felt bit uncomfortable by female teachers. Besides, male and female teachers have different ways of using nonverbal communication. Male teacher more actively appreciate the students by giving his thumbs up. Sitting when explaining the lesson was rarely doing by male teacher, whereas female teacher always doing it. On the other hand, female teacher showed her attention when the students were talking by tilting her head..

For further research, it is suggested that more researches are to be done regarding with issues of teachers' nonverbal communication in EFL classroom and issues of nonverbal communication related with teachers' gender. Furthermore, more researchers should conduct specific analysis on students' perception toward male and female teachers in teaching context.

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